

# De Soto National Memorial

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

De Soto National Memorial  
Bradenton, Florida



## **Historic Weapons Safety Regulations for Living History Volunteers and Reenactment Groups at De Soto National Memorial**

Our timeline event Five Centuries of Florida History will involve an extensive amount of historic weapons firing demonstrations featuring small arm weaponry and light artillery from the 16<sup>th</sup> through 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. All firing demonstrations will be done according to National Park Service black powder safety regulations, under the direct supervision of certified NPS Black Powder Safety Officers (BPSO's) who will have the final say on the conduct of all historic weapons firing demonstrations. Safety is our primary concern and our common goal.

Before a unit can participate in the Five Centuries event, each unit commander/reenactors must sign a Historic Weapons Firing Permit (included in this document). The permit must be signed by the unit commander/reenactors and returned to the event BPSO by mail, fax or email prior to the event. In signing the permit, the unit commander/reenactors indicates that he/she has read and understands the regulations, has communicated the same to his/her troops and will comply with them fully.

### **Acceptable Weapon Types**

For 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Century firearms, only reproduction firearms may be used. The use of original firearms is prohibited. For 20<sup>th</sup> Century Firearms all weapons must be blank firing adapted or have a flash suppressor installed to prevent the firing of particulate matter and possible projectiles i.e. pieces of brass from disintegrating shell casings.

### **Weapon Safety and the Public**

To ensure the safety of participants and the many visitors who attend our event, a high degree of weapon discipline is expected of each and every participant.

- All weapons will remain under physical control of its owners at all times.
- No weapon is to be left unattended.
- Visitors are not allowed to handle or touch a loaded weapon.
- Visitors may touch an unloaded weapon so long as the owner maintains physical control of it. DO NOT HAND YOUR WEAPON TO VISITORS.
- Participants' under the age of 16 may not handle weapons (firearms or edged weapons).
- NEVER point your weapon (firearm or edged weapon) at anyone at anytime.

## **Appropriate Drill Manuals**

Appropriate drill manuals will be used by all participants handling/demonstrating historic weapons at the event. Acceptable manuals are:

- Modified De Gheyn Drill
- 1764 Manual Exercise
- Pickering's
- Von Steubens
- HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY FM 3-21.5 (FM 22-5)
- Basic Field Manual; Infantry Drill Regulations
- Einzelausbildung ohne Gewehr, Gewehrgriffe
- Any other historic Weapon drill Appropriate to time period.

## **Ammunition**

- All black powder brought into park must be in form of prepared cartridges. Bulk or loose powder is strictly prohibited.
- Cartridges will contain no more than the maximum load size for the weapon being carried.
- Cartridges containing flour, oatmeal, wax, staples or any other inappropriate materials or substances will not pass inspection.
- Powder contained in powder horns is strictly prohibited.
- Participants under the age of 16 may not handle powder.

## **Inspections**

- All small arms used in firing demonstrations will be inspected by a National Park Service BPSO. Weapons that fail inspection may not be used in a demonstration.
- All ammunition brought on site will likewise be inspected.
- Inspections will take place at the DESO headquarters area at 9:00 a.m. the day of the event.
- Weapons must meet the following basic requirements to pass inspection
  1. Weapon must be clean and free of corrosion and gunk.
  2. No cracks and splits in gun stocks
  3. Furniture and barrel fir securely in stock
  4. No missing hardware (screws, pins, flashguards, etc...)
  5. Locks and firing mechanisms must work smoothly
  6. Half cock and safeties must be functioning
  7. Barrel free of visible dents and cracks
  8. No fouling in the barrel or on the lock or firing mechanisms\*

\*In regard to fouled barrels, a fouled weapon indicates a poorly maintained weapon and an irresponsible owner. Therefore, make sure your weapon is in good working order before you arrive.

### **Firing Procedures**

- All firing demonstrations taking place on park property may only be done under the direct supervision of a Certified BPSO.
- For protection from flash burns, all demonstrators firing historical weapons will wear natural fiber, long-sleeved outer garments or full uniforms as appropriate to their historical impression.
- Range safety standards will be observed at all times. Firing will commence or cease at the discretion of the supervising BPSO.

### **Misfire Procedures**

- For 16<sup>th</sup>- 18<sup>th</sup> Cent. Weaponry all demonstrators have three trigger pulls to discharge their weapons. After three trigger pulls, if the weapon still will not fire, dump the charge and priming. The weapon is now out of action.
- For 20<sup>th</sup> Century Weaponry if the weapon consistently jams more than four times clear the weapon. The weapon is now out of action.

### **Edged Weapons**

- Edged weapons (Swords, bayonets, knives etc...) may be drawn and brandished in a safe and prudent manner, when the bearer of the weapon is behind a barrier and out of reach of the visitor.
- At no time may participants engage in simulated combat with firearms or edged weapons.
- When not behind barrier, edged weapons may be partially drawn enough to expose some of the blade for visual inspection for interpretive purposes, but no visitor may touch the blade.
- At no time may historic weapons be fired with a fixed bayonet.

### **Historic Weapons Firing Permit**

Before a unit can participate in a living history event involving historic weapons at De Soto NM, each unit commander or reenactor must sign a Historic Weapons firing permit, which

includes a copy of the Historic Weapons Safety regulations. This permit must be signed and returned to the event BPSO by mail, fax or email prior to the event. The regulations are also available as a PDF file at <http://www.nps.gov/deso/supprtyour park/>

Mail completed permit to:

Historic Weapons Supervisor  
De Soto National Memorial  
P.O. Box 15390  
Bradenton, FL 34280  
or Fax: 941-792-5094

Unit Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Commanders Name/Reenactor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Expected number of troops: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City /State/ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone (home): \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_ (cell) \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please tell us about your units drill, weaponry, displays and historic weapons programs you would you like to do.

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In signing this permit, I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Historic Weapons Safety Regulations and have communicated the same to all participating members of my unit and will comply with them fully.

Commanders/ Reenactors Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Historic Weapons Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_